

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-19 (canceled)

20. (previously presented): An image handling apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of input interfaces for inputting image data;

a first selector for selecting one of said input interfaces for providing a first image data;

a storage device for storing a plurality of stored images;

a second selector for selecting as a second image data one of said plurality of stored images;

a device for combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

a third selector for selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data; and

a housing;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, and

wherein said plurality of input interfaces, said storage device, said first selector, said second selector, and said third selector are provided within said housing.

21. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim ~~[[19]]~~ 20, wherein said device for combining combines said first image data and said second image data by merging said first image data with said second image data.

22. (previously presented): An image handling apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of input interfaces for inputting image data;

a first selector for selecting one of said input interfaces for providing a first image data;

a storage device for storing a plurality of stored images;

a second selector for selecting as a second image data one of said plurality of stored images;

a device for combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

a third selector for selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, said device combines said first image data and said second image data by merging said first image data with said second image data, and

wherein said merging is performed on a pixel-by-pixel basis.

23. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim ~~[[19]]~~ 20, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images is a text message.

24. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim [[19]] 20, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images is a background image.

25. (currently amended): The apparatus of claim [[19]] 20, wherein at least one of said plurality of input interfaces is coupled to an image capture device.

26. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said image capture device comprise an image scanner.

27. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said image capture device comprises a networked device.

28. (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said image capture device processes an encoded image data.

Claims 29-30 (canceled)

31. (previously presented): An image handling method, comprising:

first selecting one of a plurality of input interfaces for receiving a first image data;

second selecting one of a plurality of stored images as a second image data;

combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

third selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, said combining merges said first image data with said second image data, and

wherein said merging is performed on a pixel-by-pixel basis.

32. (currently amended): The method of claim ~~29~~ 31, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images comprises a text message.

33. (currently amended): The method of claim ~~29~~ 31, wherein at least one of said plurality of stored images comprise a background image.

34. (previously presented): An image handling method, comprising:

first selecting one of a plurality of input interfaces for receiving a first image data;

second selecting one of a plurality of stored images as a second image data;

combining said first image data and said second image data to produce a third image data;

third selecting one of a plurality of receiving devices to receive said third image data;

wherein at least one of said plurality of receiving devices is an image output device, and

wherein said acts of first selecting, second selecting, third selecting, and combining are performed in a common housing.

35. (currently amended): The method of claim ~~29~~ 31, wherein at least one of said input interfaces is coupled to an image capture device.

36. (previously presented): The method of 35, wherein said image capture device comprise an image scanner.

37. (previously presented): The method of 36, wherein said image capture device comprise a networked interface.

38. (previously presented): The method of 37, wherein said image capture device processes encoded image data.

Claims 39-44 (canceled)